A DEFENCE OF Episcopacy: WITH THE DIGNITY and DUTY OF THE CLERGY.

A SERMON,

Preach'd at *TOTNES* in *DEVON*, At the Triennial Visitation held there, on *September* the 10th, 1712. Before the Worshipful Dr. PASKE, Chancellour of the Diocess of *EXON*, (in the Absence of my LORD BISHOP) and the Reverend the *CLERGY*.

By *Arthur d'Anvers*, Vicar of *Totnes*.

Ἐκκλησίαν Θεοῦ ἐκκλησιάζετε.

Publish'd at the Request of the Right Worshipful William Clement, *Esq*; *Mayor of* Totnes.

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A

SERMON

PREACHED

AT THE

CHURCH

OF THE

DISSENTING BRETHREN

WITH THE

Church:

OR

DEFENCE

OF

TO THE

Right Reverend Father in God,

OFSPRING

Lord Bishop of Exon.

My Lord,

THE ensuing Discourse, which (with some Abridgment) was design'd for your Lordship's Ear, is now humbly presented to your Lordship's Eye. Indeed, the repeated Thanks of Mr. Chancellor, and of my Brethren the Clergy in general, to me, for it, was as much beyond my Expectation, as the Honour of your Lordship's Choice of me (the meanest of all your Sons) to Preach before your Lordship and your Clergy, was beyond it: And I had rested more than abundantly satisfy'd with this unexpected Honour and Applause, much above my Ambition, without the least aspiring Inclination or Thought to shew my self in Print, being apprehensive enough, the Weight of the Press is what no Performance of

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mine can well enough. But that Mr. Clement, the Mayor of Totnes, was pleased to be importunate for the Publication of this Discourse: And truly, my Obligations to Mr. Clement, during the whole Course of his Mayoralty, were such, as that I must be the vilest Ingrate if I deny'd him any thing that is in my Power to grant. Though, in Truth, I can see no Inducement he could have for making this Request, unless it were to provoke abler Pens to exert their Skill in the Defence of the Hierarchy of our Church, which is of Apostolical Institution, and of the Dignity of the Sacred Function: In the Defence of both which, I have here shew'd but an honest, plain, and hearty Zeal, without the Colours and Ornaments of Eloquence, in any part of my Sermon, to recommend it: (I must except) only in that single Paragraph, which I borrow'd and transcribed from your Lordship; all whose Writings in general, have this peculiar Excellency, that at the same time they can boast the nicest Purity and Majesty of Diction, are yet level and intelligible to the meanest Capacities; which I conceive to be the very Perfection of Eloquence, when the Stile is at once both Plain and Sublime.

I am sufficiently aware, that a Man generally perswades but little, when he goes about to plead for Respect to his own Order. But as 'tis always allow'd to be a thing both fitting and commendable

dable in those that hold any Place or Trust under an Earthly Prince, to keep up the Dignity of their Commission, and to insist upon that Observance and Respect which is customary and decent. I shall therefore offer no Apology that I have here urged, by more than Parity of Reason, that God's Ministers, the Stewards of his Mysteries, and Ambassadors for Christ, should justly expect to be rever'd and honour'd for the Sake of him whose Commissioners they are, as well as for their Works sake. And if I have been a little warm upon this Chapter, they who know me, are sensible I have but too much Cause for it; and they who do not know me, I suppose, will easily guess it. Sure I am, we cannot well be too zealous in insisting upon the Respect due to our sacred Character, as we are the Ministers of Jesus Christ, appointed by him to illuminate his Church; the Effect of our Ministry depending in great Measure thereupon. But 'tis a Truth no less sad than notorious, that since a late Pestilential * Book came abroad in the World, the Clergy (to the wonderful Joy of Atheists, Deists, and Libertines,) have been growing into Contempt more and more every Day; insomuch, that too many, even of our own Communion, seem now to retain but little, if any, Sense of the Reverence and Affection which is due from them to their Spiritual Guides; it being accounted in a man-

* The Rights.

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ver unfashionable, not to contemn the Priesthood. And then, since the Case is thus with us, sure it is more than High Time for us to stand up in the Defence of the Sacredness and Dignity of our Order; that so we may preserve ourselves, at least, from the Guilt of Partaking in this execrable Sacrilege of the People, which we necessarily devolve upon ourselves, if we sooth or connive at them in it.

May it please your Lordship,

To pardon my Presumption in prefixing so great a Name as your Lordship's, to so mean a Trifle; which has no other Pretense to your Protection, but as 'tis an honest Effort to do some Justice to that Hierarchy and Priesthood, which your Lordship has strenuously Defended, and Adorns.

I am, My Lord,

Your Lordship's most Dutiful,

and most obedient Servant,

Arthur d'Anvers.

St. MAT. V. 14.

Ye are the Light of the World.

CONcerning the Words now read, the Three following *Quæries* do naturally arise; 1. By whom they are spoken: 2. To whom they are directed: 3. What they import. And,

1*st*, By whom they are spoken? Which *Question* is soon resolved, by observing, that the Words are a Portion of our Great Master's SERMON on the *Mount*: And if we enquire into the Occasion of that SERMON, it may help us to resolve the Second *Quære*, *viz.*

2*dly*, To whom they are directed. Now, that SERMON seems to me, to have been particularly Occasional at the Ordination of the *Twelve*; or their Inauguration to the Apostolical Office; as it were easy to prove at large from the paralel Places in the Evangelists, St. *Mark*, and St. *Luke*, from the general Scope of the *Discourse* it self; as well as from several special Passages in it, all of which seem to appropriate it to this solemn

Occasion: But, for Brevities sake, I will but just glance at each of these.

1st, I begin with St. *Mark*, (*Mark* 3. 8. compar'd with *Mat.* 4. 25.) where we may observe, when JESUS's Fame had drawn together a great Multitude of People, which flock'd unto him from all the Countries round about, *from* Jerusalem, *and from* Idumea, *and from beyond* Jordan, *and from about* Tyre *and* Sydon, Mark 8. 3. — That *He went up into a Mountain* (the Pulpit from whence He deliver'd this most heavenly SERMON) *and called unto him whom he would; and they came unto him, and he Ordained Twelve, that they should be with him.*

Which Passage seems to Evidence, that the Time *when*, and the Place *where*, the *Twelve* were solemnly Chosen, and Ordained Apostles (before a vast Assembly of *Disciples* and others) and *when* and *where* this SERMON was preach'd, were one and the same: And then, if so, what more probable, than that the SERMON it self (which contains a compleat SYSTEM of the *Christian Doctrine* under its Improvement, and Reformation from the Old Law) was particularly Occasional at this High Solemnity, and Calculated chiefly for those, who were newly Chosen and Commission'd to be the First Promulgers of the Gospel of Christ, as their full

and

and solemn Instructions for accomplishing that great and glorious Work.

2dly, St. *Luke* observes likewise, that our Saviour chose, *i. e.* Ordain'd the *Twelve*, upon the *Mount*, where (as that Evangelist has Recorded) he spent the whole Antecedent Night in Prayer (Cap. 6. 11, 12, 13) in all probability, for imploring his Father's Influence upon the enduing Choice. And then 'tis equally probable, that the Day of Ordination was devoted to their Instruction in the Great Work which they had then undertaken.

3dly, The general Scope of the SERMON adds Strength to what hath been said: For it is (as I hinted above) a compleat *Comment* upon the whole LAW of *Moses*, which Christ has here *Review'd* and *Reform'd*; heightning the former Duties, and requiring a more Elevated Performance of them than was before (or at least, then was believed and understood to have been before) under Precept: This Reformation extending to the Three several Branches of the Old Law; that of Works being Improv'd and Reform'd into that of Faith; External Ceremonial Performances, into an Internal and Spiritual Worship; and Strict and Rigid Justice, into Reason and Equity. Which doubtless, was very suitable, and perhaps the pro-

propereſt Charge that could be deliver'd even by the Great Biſhop of our Souls to his Apoſtles, at their Entrance upon their Great and Sacred Function. But,

4thly, Laſtly, there are ſome ſpecial Paſſages in the SERMON, which ſeem to appropriate it to this ſolemn Occaſion. As (1.) the Introduction ſeems to refer, in a ſpecial manner, to the Apoſtles: For Poverty of Spirit, Mourning, Meekneſs, Hunger and Thirſt after Righteouſneſs, Mercifulneſs, Purity of Heart, Peace-making, and eſpecially ſuffering Perſecution for Righteouſneſs ſake: Tho' they are certainly Duties highly becoming all Chriſtians in general, yet reflect a peculiar Aſpect on the firſt Publiſhers of the Goſpel of Chriſt, as might eaſily be prov'd, if I had time to Argue from each of theſe Duties in particular.

And then, as for the *Beatitudes* ſeverally annex'd to each of them, tho' they have plainly a General View for inviting all Mankind to the Practice of the Duties, for the ſake of their reſpective Rewards: Yet ſtill, moſt of them ſeem to have a particular Regard to the Apoſtles, for ſupporting and buoying them up under the great and diſmaying Hazards, which would unavoidably beſet them in Palming upon the World ſuch a Religion, as had

had ancient and ſturdy Prejudice, as well as the keen Edge of Carnal Appetite, to obſtruct and oppoſe it's Progreſs; and conſequently, to diſcourage and affright the firſt Promulgers of it.

Add to all this, That in the End of thoſe *Beatitudes*, we meet with the Fear of Perſecution provided againſt; not only by the Promiſe of a great Reward in Heaven; but alſo, (which makes for our Conjecture) by the Example of the Ancient Prophets— *Bleſſed are ye when Men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of Evil againſt you falſly for my ſake: Rejoyce and b exceeding glad, for great is your Reward in Heaven; for ſo perſecuted they the Prophets which were before you.*— Where the Turn of the Addreſs ſeems peculiar to the Apoſtles, from the Similitude of Office between them and their Fore-runners, the Prophets.

And to whom elſe, but to the Apoſtles, can He, with the leaſt Propriety, be ſaid to have Addreſs'd himſelf; where he ſays (in the Verſe immediately preceding my Text) *Ye are the Salt of the Earth?* It being their peculiar Buſineſs to preſerve, by the *binding* Quality of ſound Doctrine, Mens Minds and Manners from *Spiritual*; as 'tis that of common Salt, to preſerve its proper Subject from *Natural Putrefaction.*

And

And the like may still more strenuously be argued from the Words of my Text, *Ye are the Light of the World.* For who else can, in any Propriety of Sense, be meant by this [*Ye*], but the Apostles (and in them the future Clergy) whose *Proper Office* it is *to Reclaim* the World from the Gross Darkness of Sin and Error, by the Glorious and Shining Light of the Gospel of Truth; as it is the *Property of Natural Light* to banish that Night of Darkness, which destroys and confounds the Appearance and Distinction of Things in the World, and to present them naked to the Eye in their true Situation, Figure, and Colour. Which may serve for an Answer to the Third *Quere*, and gives the Import of the Words—*Ye are the Light of the World.*—

The Word *Light* (in the Text) is put for the Word *Luminary*, the Effect for the Efficient Cause. According to which Dialect *Moses* expresst himself (*Gen.* I. 16.) where he said—*God made two great Lights, the greater Light to rule the Day, and the lesser Light to Rule the Night.*— Speaking of the Sun and Moon, (the two great Cœlestial Luminaries) to which he adds—*He made the Stars also.* Which I observe, because it seems Remarkable, that as in the Natural, so in the Spiritual, or Ecclesiastical Firmament, God Created several Orders and Degrees of Lights; the

the greater Luminaries in both seeming alike to have been made and design'd for Rule and Government; as the lesser in both seem to have been appointed to Adorn and Enlighten their respective Spheres in an Inferior, and subordinate Capacity only; — *Ye are the Light of the World.* — The whole Body of the Clergy are Lights, but with a difference and distinction (as among the Celestial Luminaries) of Order, Rank, and Magnitude.

This Attribute of Light, which Christ has here bestow'd on his Apostles, and in them on their Successors, the future Clergy, unto whom it likewise extends, is perhaps one of the highest Complements (in the Best Sense of this Word) that has ever been vouchsafed to Mortal Men; whether we regard the Person speaking, *to wit*, the Eternal Son of God, who is equal to his Father, as touching his Godhead; Or, *2dly*, the Thing spoken, Light being one of the most glorious and useful Creatures that ever issu'd from the Wisdom and Power of the great Creator of the World, and consequently the most Enobling Attribute that Christ himself could ascribe to his Creature, and honour him with.

So Enobling an Attribute is this of Light, that God the Father himself delights, as it were to be described and represented by it, as by an Image the most Expressive of his Ineffable

Purity

Purity, Majesty, and Glory.—*God is Light* (says St. *John*, 1 Epist. 1. 5.) *and in him is no Darkness at all.* He is term'd *the Father of Lights* by St. *James*, (1. 17.) And his Habitation (to amplify the unspeakable Glory of it) is by St. *Paul* describ'd to be in unapproachable Light;—*who only hath Immortality, dwelling in the Light, which no Man can approach unto*, 1 Tim. 6. 16.

And as God the Father, so God the Son, hath, in a peculiar manner, adopted this shining Title of Light to himself.—*I am the Light of the World* (says Christ) speaking of himself, in the very same Words in which he speaks (in the Text) of his Apostles, *John* 8. 12. And in another Place St. *John* bears Record—*That be is the true Light which lighteth every one that cometh into the World*—What the Sun (the great Celestial Light) is to this sublunary World, directing Men and other Creatures, in their natural Motions and Actions, and Warming, Enlivening, and Cherishing them, by his Influence; the same is Christ (who is Son of Righteousness) to his Church, banishing Darkness out of it, and Cherishing and Refreshing the *Souls* of Men, by the Genial Rays of Truth, and the Invigorating Influence of the *Spirit* of *Purity*.

And this same Christ it is (who is thus said to be the Original Light of the World,)

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that has deriv'd upon his Clergy (who, under the Guidance of his Spirit, are to Act in his Stead, and to represent Him as Ambassadors to his Church) a communicated Light, by which, in their Master's Absence, they are to Illuminate the Church Militant's benighted Regions: Not unlike the *Moon*, (pardon the Comparison) which Illuminates this *Terrestrial Globe* with a borrow'd Shine, in the Absence of the *Sun*. For in this Secondary Sense it is, that Christ in my Text tells his *Disciples*, (or rather his *Apostles*) —*Ye are the Light of the World*.— Not the Original Light of it, as if their Light were of and thrô themselves; but the Deputed Light, by a Shine or Lustre borrow'd and deriv'd from Him, who is the Prime Source and Fountain of Light.

From the Words thus view'd, I will take occasion to do these Three Things:

I. Enquire what Orders of Men they are, who were appointed by Christ and his Apostles to Illuminate the World, and are Entrusted with the Spiritual Rule and Conduct of his People to the World's End. —They are the Light of the World; that is, Luminaries of the Church: And God, *who made Two Great Lights, the greater Light to rule the Day, and the lesser Light to rule the Night, made the Stars also.*

II. Conſider the Dignity of the Sacred Function in General, —*They are the Light of the World.*—Without whom the World would be no better then a rude *Chaos* of Darkneſs and Confuſion, of Sin and Error.

III. What is Imply'd in their being ſtiled the Light of the World; and how they are to Demean themſelves, ſo as to become this bright and ſhining Character. And,

1. I am to Enquire what Orders of Men they are, *&c.* When the Ancient People of God, the *Jews*, had deſerted Him, by rejecting the Goſpel of his Son; 'tis obſervable, that Chriſt made Choice of *Twelve Apoſtles*, and *Seventy Diſciples*, anſwerable to the *Twelve Princes* of *Tribes*, and *Seventy Elders* which govern'd under *Moſes*; by this Alluſion to ſignify, That the CHURCH was henceforward to be the *Spiritual Iſrael* of God. But then, that he never deſign'd this Inſtitution ſhould be permanent, is evident, for this very good Reaſon; namely, Becauſe when *Chriſtianity* ſhould come to be diſpers'd all the World over, it could not poſſibly be Govern'd by One Sovereign Court of *Judicature*; as *Iſrael*, who dwelt all in one and the ſame Land, might eaſily be; as indeed it actually was by that of *Moſes*, and his *Seventy Elders*. So that as this

Order

Order in process of Time grew useless, it ceased of Course; the Twelve *Apostles* remaining always the Judges of the Twelve *Tribes* of *Israel*, here and in the World to come.

To these we may add the other extraordinary Gifts and Offices which Christ Ascending up on High by the Effusion of the Holy Ghost, gave unto Men: Such as those mentioned in the Epistles to the *Corinthians* and the *Ephesians*— *He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers*, &c. — For these, (at least, as to their Miraculous Abilities, and the extraordinary manner in the exercise of their Gifts) being necessary only for the Conviction of an Unbelieving World, and the first building of the Church, when it began to be well-settled and Confirm'd, are agreed on all hands to have ceased.

These were the first Luminaries of the Church of Christ; Luminaries emphatically so stiled! being full of Glory, Light, and Amplitude! In comparison of whom the greatest of their Successors are no better than as so many twinkling *Stars*, compared to the glorious *Sun*, which vanish, and as it were, evenexpire at his Presence! For these all had the extraordinary vouchsafement of God's own *Spirit*, to Brighten and to Glorify their Appearance! Let these therefore pass, as the peculiar Fa-

vorites of Heaven! Whose extraordinary vouchsafements from thence let us not Envy, but rather let us Admire and Congratulate! And let us Adore the Ineffable Goodness of that *God*, who has graciously dispens'd such *miraculous Gifts* unto Men! Unto Men, whose Father is Corruption, and whose Sister and Mother is the Worm, (*Job*, 17. 14.)

Passing by these in profound Silence and Veneration! I design chiefly to enquire into the several Orders of those standing Luminaries, which the Apostles Instituted, for the Illumination, Discipline, and Government of the Church, to the World's End; which I shall, God willing, prove to be that of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, the several Orders which compose the truly Apostolical Hierarchy of the Church of *England*.

And First, As the Number of the *Disciples* was multiplied, we find the *Apostles, who thought it not Reason that they should leave the Word of God, and serve Tables, Ordain'd by Imposition of Hands, Seven* Deacons or Ministers, *Acts* 6. 5, 6. Afterwards, as greater Numbers were added to the Church, the Apostles proceeded to the Ordination of some of an Higher Order and Degree; to wit, of *Presbyters*, or *Elders*, as well to Plant as to Water the Faith, *Acts* 14. 23. And lastly, as the Church began to spread, and to get Foot-

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ing in divers Countries, the *Apoſtles*, who could not be preſent to Ordain Perſonally in all Places thought it neceſſary to delegate their Power to others; as well to Ordain *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, as to Govern (in Spiritual Matters) both the *Clergy* and *Laity*. Thus St. *Paul* particularly appointed *Timothy* and *Titus* to preſide over the Churches of *Crete* and *Epheſus*, as appears from his Epiſtles to each of them; where he gives them ſpecial Authority to Ordain Elders in every City; with Directions how to Chuſe, and how to Rule, and Cenſure them; ſuch Authority and Directions as we no where in Scripture find to have been given to any of the Ordinary Presbyters: Which plainly Argues, that they were Superior to the Common *Presbyters*, both in Order and Authority.

As to what our Adverſaries idly pretend, That all *Presbyters* are Biſhops, without any difference of Order and Authority; becauſe the Ordinary Presbyter is ſometimes ſtiled Overſeer, or Biſhop in common, with thoſe of that Diſtinct Order; it ſcarce deſerves a ſerious Anſwer: For, May not the ſame Name, or Title, be common to ſeveral Peſons in one reſpect, and yet be peculiar to one of them in another reſpect? And thus was the Word Overſeer, or Biſhop, promiſcuouſly apply'd, both to Presbyter and Biſhop, as the Charge or Overſight

verſight of Souls was Common to both: But then, as the Overſight or Government, both of Clergy and Laity, in Spiritual Matters, was peculiar to the Biſhop diſtinctly ſo called; ſo in this reſpect was the Title alſo peculiar to him; which Title tho' we acknowledge to have been promiſcuouſly Applied in the beginning; Yet, in proceſs of time, as the Number of Presbyters multiplied the Word Biſhop came to be Appropriated to the Superior Order. And, 'tis obſervable that where-ever in Scripture the Word Overſeer, or Biſhop, is applied to the Common Presbyter, it is always with reſpect to the Overſight of Souls, without any Reference to Ordination, or Spiritual Government, to be exerciſed over the Clergy and Laity, which makes the Diſtiction.

And indeed, the Diſtinction, and Superiority of the Epiſcopal Order, ſtands irrefragably Exemplified in the Perſon of St. *James*, the Brother of our Lord, (whether one of the *Twelve*, or not, I think needleſs to Diſpute) who, by the Concurrent Teſtimony, both of Scripture and Antiquity, ſtands recorded, as Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*; and ſeems alſo to have been *Charg'd* with the Care of other Churches; eſpecially of the Circumciſion, which, perhaps, by his means, together with St. *Peter* and *John*, were won to *Chriſtianity*; as ſeems probable from *Gal.* 2. 9, 10. And by the Account

count which St. *James* himself gives in his General Epistle, where we find him bespeaking the Churches of the *Jewish* Dispersion in the stile of an Apostle, Cap. 1. 6. 1.

In one Word, Episcopal Government is as Ancient as the Apostles Days, and hath been in force ever since their Time; whose immediate Successors are to be Named in the greatest Sees; and the manner of the Institution in short was this: By the Apostles appointment, the whole Body of Christians contain'd in each City, and the Precincts and Territories thereof, was to Constitute a several Church of such a respective Denomination; which Church was to be Govern'd by one Chief Ruler call'd a *Bishop*, who had a convenient Number of *Presbyters* subordinate to him, both for Advising, and Assisting him on all proper Occasions; and likewise a suitable Number of *Deacons* or *Ministers*, to execute his Commands. And every such See, or Bishoprick, borrow'd its Rank or Quality (and was either greater, or less) from that of the City wherein it was Seated. So that the chief Cities of the Christian World, at the first Planting of Christianity, being *Rome*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch*, those Cities denominated the Chief Churches, and as *Rome* was then the Chief of all, so was the Church of *Rome*: —

An hanc enim Ecclesiam propter potentiorem Principalitatem,

cipalitatem, neceſſe eſt omnem Convenire Eccleſiam.—

And indeed the Unity of the Cathoilck Church (which is one main Article of our *Creed*) was evidently maintain'd in the beginning, by thus dividing Chriſtendom into Churches, or as they are now called *Dioceſſes*, providing each *Dioceſs* with a ſufficient Number of *Prieſts* and *Deacons*, under *One* Head, the *Biſhop*; as well to Regulate the Faith and Manners of the People, as to Miniſter unto them in Holy Things. For the ſeveral Heads, or Biſhops of their Chief Churches (upon which the leſſer depended) maintain'd a conſtant Correſpondence with each other, by the intercourſe of Communicatory Letters —*Commercio Formatarum*, as *Optatus* (Lib. 11.) expreſſes it; havintg brought down his Catalogue of the Biſhops of *Rome* to *Damaſcus*— *Damaſo ſyricius hodie* (ſaith he) *cum quo nobis totius Orbis, Commercio Formatarum, in unâ Communionis Societate concordat.*—Which Letters of Mark concern'd not only the Publick Buſineſs of Churches, but were uſually given to private Chriſtians, whether of the *Clergy* or the *Laity*, that when they travell'd into Foreign Countries, they might Certify their Rank and Quality at Home, and ſo be receiv'd to Communicate accordingly, in all Churches abroad all over the World. And

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whenſoever, inſtead of this daily Correſpondence, Synods or Councils were aſſembled upon more preſſing Occaſions, it is evident by Church-Records, that only Biſhops, or at leaſt their Deputies, when they could not Perſonally attend themſelves, appear'd in behalf of their Reſpective Churches. From the Premiſes we may obſerve,

1*ſt*. That the great *Babel* of Authority which the Popes of *Rome* have fantaſtically erected to themſelves in Right of St. *Peter*, falls down to the Ground at once, as being built upon a Sandy Foundation: For if *Rome* held the firſt Place among other Churches in the dawn of Chriſtianity only becauſe of her Supremecy (in Civil Affairs; for this is all that is intended by the *Potentior Principalitas* before mention'd) above all other Cities at that time in the World, as 'tis evident ſhe only did: What Preheminence, I pray, does this ſuppoſe in St. *Peter* to the reſt of the Apoſtles, but barely as he happen'd to be the Biſhop of *Rome*, which then was the Worlds Metropolis? Or to his Succeſſors the Popes of *Rome*, to other Biſhops (not to ſay Kings and Emperors, as they arrogantly claim) upon any other pretence, but as *Rome* which was the Pope's See was then alſo the Seat of the Empire; or any longer than while it ſhould continue to be the Seat of the Empire.

2*dly*, From the Premiſes we may obſerve further, That the whole Pretence of Independant Congregations is quite blown up: For if the Apoſtles appointed all ſeperate Churches to Compoſe but *One* Catholick, or Univerſal Church, by the Communion of all Churches in the Service of God which ſuppoſes the ſame Faith; then conſequently they did not appoint all Congregations to be Independant, and Chief among themſelves, but to depend upon the whole, both for the Rule of Faith, and for the Order of Worſhip. And therefore all thoſe Scriptures which are generally alledg'd to prove the People's Supremecy in relation to the Church, import nothing more but the bare Teſtimony, Conſent and Concurrence; by way of Suffrage, or Agreement and Applauſe, to the *Acts* and *Conſtitutions* of the Clergy; as I could eaſily demonſtrate, had I time within the compaſs of this Diſcourſe, to examine the ſeveral Paſſages commonly urg'd to this purpoſe. And then, to ſuppoſe the Laitys Soveraignty in Eccleſiaſtical Matters on this Title, is juſt as Ridiculouſly abſurd, as to ſuppoſe the Engliſh Mobs Soveraignty in Matters of Civil Judicature, becauſe Engliſh Juries (which are generally choſen out of the Vulgar) have Power to Return Evidence in Matter of Fact, Effectual, or Void; but ſtill, as ridiculous, and great an Abſurdi-

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ty as this ſuppoſition is, yet ſome Engliſh Men have Throats wide enough, it ſeems, to ſwallow it down glibly in both Caſes.

3*dly*, From the Premiſes I obſerve in the laſt place That the Platform of the Presbyteries is alſo ſap'd, and overturn'd: For if the Presbyters, according to the Apoſtolical Conſtitution, are Subordinate and Miniſterial to Biſhops, whoſe Prerogative it is to Ordain, and to Govern both Clergy and Laity within their Dioceſs in Spiritual Matters; as I have ſhewn: How then can every particular Congregation Conſtitute a Church, with a Conſiſtory to Rule it, conſiſting of a Presbyter, with his Lay-Elders and Deacons? Nor is there any ground that I could ever meet with, either from Scripture, or Antiquity, to Caſt as many of theſe Congregations as they think fit, into a Reſort, or Diviſion, nameing it a Claſs or Seſſion: Nor again, of theſe Seſſions into a Synod; nor laſtly, of Synods into a Province. For indeed, this Jargon of Words is as barbarous to the Language of the Scriptures, as the Subject is to the inſpir'd Penmen thereof;

And ſo much for the firſt Thing—I proceed now to the 2d thing which I propoſed, *viz.*

II. To conſider the Great Dignity of the Sacred Function in general—*They are the*

Light of the World; without whom it would be no other then a rude Chaos of Darkness and Confusion of Sin and Error. And for this reason it is that St. *Paul* calls upon them *To put on the whole Armour of God, that they may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil: For we wrestle not* (as he Argues) *against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World; against Spiritual Wickedness in high Places; wherefore as* (he Jugeminates the Præcept) *take unto you the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand in the Evil Day.* Ephes. 6. 11, 12, 13. These several Orders of Evil Spirits (here mentioned) are formidable Enemies to Encounter, and the Kingdom of Darkness is a large and Powerful Kingdom to invade: And yet the Clergy (who are the Soldiers and Officers of Christ) are to oppose those Enemies (as formidable as they are) *by the Sword of the Spirit*, and to subdue this Kingdom (as wide and powerful as 'tis) *by the Word of his Power.*

In short they are not only Officers and Soldiers; (but what is still more honourable) Ambassadors of Christ. And then, if the Dignity of an Ambassador be proportion'd to the Grandeur of the Prince whom he had the Honour to Personate, as well as to the Importance of the Affair he is entrusted to Negotiate;

ate; which I ſuppoſe will be eaſily granted: Why then, upon this ſuppoſition in both reſpects, the ſacred Order may, I am ſure without arrogance, pretend to an equality (I will only ſay to an equality, whatever more I might have ſaid) with the greateſt Courtiers on Earth: For ſure no Earthly Potentate will pretend to vie Dignity with the Eternal Son of God, whoſe Ambaſſadors they have the Honour to be ſtiled? Nor can any thing well be of greater Importance and Moment, then the Concerns of Eternity to the Souls of Men, which is the Subject Matter of their grand Treaty or Negotiation in this World. And hence it is that Chriſt ſo often Honours his Clergy by the moſt familier Compellations of *Love* and *Friendſhip*, as by that of *Brethren*, *Companions*, *Fellow-Labourers*, and the like: And that we find him every where in Scripture to Reſent all Injuries, or Kindneſſes done to them, in the ſame manner as if done to his own Perſon; nay, and even as if done to his Heavenly Father: (vide) *Luke* 10. 16. *Theſ.* 4. 8. For they are ſent by him, as he was ſent by his Father.

In Truth, the *Dignity* of the *Prieſthood* is as Ancient as the Beginning of *Day*: For if we may believe the beſt of the *Jewiſh* * Writers, it was for 2000 Years and upwards after the Creation, entruſted with the

* *Philo. Joſeph. Maimon.*

Firſt-

First-born as his Priviledge. And when God was pleas'd to diſcharge the First-born from that high Office, we read that he Adopted a whole Tribe in his ſtead (*Num.* 3.) which Tribe he always honour'd with peculiar Marks of *Honour*, and *Diſtinction*. And when the fullneſs of Time was come that this Tribe was alſo diſcharg'd, and the Prieſthood of *Aaron* Aboliſh'd by the Incarnation of the Son of God; our Bleſſed Mediator of a better Covenant no leſs Faithful in his Houſe than *Moſes* (*Heb.* 3.) left not his Church without Governours, but appointed Preachers of his Sacred Goſpel to take the *Place* and *Dignity* of the Diſmiſſed *Levites*, *and promiſed his Preſence with them to the End of the World*, (Mat. 2. 8.) His Preſence! Not only to Illuminate and Direct, but alſo to Dignifie and Protect them, by the Infinite Power, and Sacredneſs thereof.

Pardon me, if I ſtep aſide to take a tranſient View of the Enſigns and Titles of Honour, ſupported by the *Heathen Prieſthood*. *Tacitus* obſerves, (*De Mor. Ger.*) That among the the Old *Germans*, —*Sacerdotibus juxta & regibus Honor habitus eſt.*— King and Prieſts were Honour'd alike. *Virgil* tells us, That the Prieſt of *Apollo* was the King of the People, —*Anio Rex idem Hominum, Phœbique Sacerdos.* And long before him, *Homer* (the Prince

Prince of *Poets*) represents the Priest of the same *Apollo* leaning upon a *Golden Scepter*, (the certain Ensign of Royalty) while he Treats with the *Grecian* Generals about the Ransom of his Daughter.

——Χρυσεω εν σκηπτρῳ, ᾗ ελιζετο παντας Αχαιους.

In a Word, *Strabo*, *Cicero*, and others, talk so loftily of the Priesthood, as if so universally Great and Reverend were the Reputation of it, as if it were the very highest Honour any Mortal is capable of; an Honour immediately next to a *Deity*. And one would be tempted to hearken to them, who believes another Author's Flight of the proud Sultan's honouring the *Mufti*, (*Gabr. Sioneta*) whom he receives with a Deference, which he hardly vouchsafes to the highest *Prince* on Earth. Or that reflects, how *Alexander* the Great, that mighty Emperor, in whom the World once truckled; and moreover, who affected to be thought himself a God, when he met *Jaddus* the *Jewish* High-Priest, adorn'd with his *Pontificals* and Robes of State, fell down at his Feet and worship'd him. So great was the Deference which the very *Pagans* paid to the *Priesthood*.

But to return from this *Digression*. It was an old *Axiom* among *Christians*, That any Relation to the Church entitles a Man to Honour.

And

And any one that is read in *Engliſh* Story, will find the meaneſt Clergyman of no ſmall Account among our own Forefathers. The Biſhops, during the *Saxon Period*, were rank'd among the greater *Thanes*; and in the *Norman*, among the *Barons*. And all our beſt Authors mention, how that Churchmen have born even all (at leaſt) the moſt Honourable Offices of State; and (however undervalued by ſome) have diſcharg'd themſelves with Integrity and Reputation: *England*, as well as other Nations, owing more of its Felicity to Men of this Station, than to any other. And, I have good Hope, that it preſages no ſmall Share of Imminent Happineſs to this Nation, that we have a QUEEN now ſitting upon the *Britiſh* Throne (long may She Fill and Adorn it) who has thought ſome of this Order equal to Civil Employments of the greateſt Truſt and Dignity! May their Royal Miſtreſs ever proceed to Countenance and Encourage Her Clergy, who have ever approved themſelves to be the trueſt Friends of Monarchy: And may they mutually, ever proceed by their conſtant Loyalty and Zeal, to deſerve, as they now enjoy, Her Royal Favour and Bounty.

Thus have you heard (my Reverend Brethren) how that in all Ages, your Profeſſion hath been accounted highly Honourable, which ſurrounds your Heads with *Circ'ling Glory:*

But

But then, let not this high Honour exalt us above our selves, or puff us up with Pride or Vain-Glory; but on the contrary, rather Humble and Abase us under the serious Sense of our own great unworthiness to be so highly exalted and honoured of the Son of God. And let this Humility engage us at endeavouring to Reflect back upon our Holy Profession, by an exemplary Discharge of our Duty, that Lustre which we mutually derive and borrow from it: Which leads to the Third thing I propos'd, *viz.*

III. To enquire what is implyed in their being Stiled the *Light of the World*; and how they are to demean themselves so as to become this *shining Character*. Light and Knowledge are Images so near of Kin, and so like in their Operations, that nothing is more common than to signifie the latter by the former, and 'tis in this Metaphorical Sense we are to understand the Word *Light* in the Text: For it can't be supposed that the *Apostles*, or any other set of Men, are said to be the *Light of the World* literally speaking; but only this, that they are to supply to Men's Understandings what *Natural Light* is to their Eyes, that is, to Direct, Guide, or Instruct them in the Ways of Truth and Holiness: The Nature of their

Office being elegantly Repreſented, and Illuſtrated, by the *Image of Light*; becauſe as *Light* is the Inſtrument whereby Darkneſs and Confuſion are baniſh'd from the face of things; ſo is Knowledge or Truth the means whereby Sin and Error (which are called Spiritual Darkneſs and Confuſion) are baniſh'd from the Minds of Men. I have obſerved before, that the Word *Light* (in any Text) is uſed for the Word *Luminary*; And now I come to Obſerve that the Word *Luminary* ſuppoſes two Things: Firſt Subjective, Secondly Objective *Light*. By Subjective *Light* is meant that *Lucid Quality*, or *Light* which is ſuppoſed to be in the Subject it ſelf: By Objective *Light* the actual Application or Influence of that *Lucid Quality* upon outward Objects. Correſpondent to which there is ſuppoſed in every *Clergyman* (under the Notion of a *Spiritual Luminary*) a Twofold Knowledge, which may be diſtinguiſh'd alſo into Subjective and Objective; by the former is meant an habitual *Science* of Spiritual Things; by the latter the Application of this *Science* to the Underſtandings of Men, which are the proper Objects thereof. To ſuppoſe a Natural *Luminary* without Subjective *Light*, is to ſuppoſe a flat Contradiction: And to ſuppoſe a *Spiritual Luminary* without Subjective Knowledge, amounts to as great an Abſurdity: For

you may as well ſuppoſe that a Sun compoſed of Pitch could illuminate the Earth, as that an illiterate *Clergy-Man* could illuminate the *Church*. But then, as to the exact meaſure of Knowledge or Learning, which is neceſſary for compleating every *Clergy-Man*, it is neither proper, nor yet poſſible for me to determine; any more than it is to take the exact Dimentions of the Lucid Quality of the *Sun*, and the other *Cæleſtial Luminaries*. Neither would I preſume to Dictate to this Learned Aſſembly, from any of which I could be proud to Learn. But yet, thus far, I hope, I may, without offence, be a Remembrancer to my ſelf and others—*That we ſhew our ſelves approv'd, Workmen that need not be aſham'd, rightly dividing the Word of Truth*, 2 Tim. 2. 14. We muſt (at leaſt) have a competent Knowledge of the Sacred Myſteries and Truths which we are to Deliver. The loweſt Qualification that St. *Paul* requires in the meaneſt of the Order is, *That he be apt to Teach* (i. e.) That he be ſtock'd with ſuch Natural, and Acquir'd Accompliſhments, as are ſufficient for Inſtruction; ſufficient to make plain the weighty Things of Salvation; ſufficient, if not to Adorn, yet, at leaſt, not to diſgrace his High Calling and Profeſſion. But then, it is neither neceſſary, not yet poſſible, that every Member of this Sacred Order, ſhou'd

arrive at an equal Degree and Height of Knowledge: All Men have not Talents alike. It is not every Man's happiness to be Cloath'd with such an Ample Robe of Light, as to Qualifie him to be a Luminary of the first Magnitude! To be an Apostle, an Evangelist, or a Bishop! Neither is it needful he should; because all are not cut out for, neither is it possible that all should arrive to enjoy these Higher Stations: And meaner Parts and Abilities may be of equal Service in an Inferior Sphere. But indeed, the great and shining Wisdom of the Almighty seems to me to be not a little Conspicuous in this Beautiful Subordination and Difference: That as there are several Orders and Degrees of Glory, among the *Celestial Luminaries*, so there should also be among the Spiritual or Ecclesiastical. That as there is one Glory of the *Sun*, and another Glory of the *Moon*, and another Glory of the *Stars*; and as one *Star* differs from another *Star* in Glory; So there should be one Glory of an Apostle, and another Glory of a Bishop, and another Glory of a Presbyter; and one Presbyter should differ from another Presbyter in Glory. But nevertheless, this nothing hinders but that every *Clergy-Man* should Aspire after the utmost Perfection of Knowledge; For the more he knows, the better he is qualify'd for discharging his

his Duty here, and perhaps for Enjoying the Beatifical Vision hereafter: If at least, the Hypotheſis of ſome may be admitted, that the Souls future Growth in Knowledge in the other World will be proportioned to its Improvement in it here in this preſent Life, which, I think, is Motive ſufficient to excite our beſt Endeavours for attaining to the greateſt Proficiency in Knowledge, ſince it will probably ſo highly Reward our utmoſt Pains, by its Uſefulneſs to us here, and in the World to come.

But then, let us laugh at thoſe whimſical Enthuſiaſts, who think to waft themſelves, by I know not what Dreams and Viſions, into the Region of Knowledge; as if, by clapping their Eye-lids together, and ſqueezing them cloſe, the Sparks of Fire which might poſſibly flaſh from their mutual Colliſion, ſhould preſently grow up, and ſpread into a ſhining Flame of Divine Knowledge, and brighten to the Diſcerning of all the profound Myſteries and Depths of Chriſtianity. Little do theſe lazy Dreamers reflect, That even in the little Myſteries of Heathen Theology, nay, in the very Search and Improvement of Natural Knowledge, there were ſeveral Ceremonies of Inſtitution, and no ſmall Culture both of Body and Mind, before they could be number'd among the *Adepti*, or thought to have attain'd

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the true Character of knowing Men. And *Solomon* assures us from his own Experience, That *in much Wisdom is much Grief; and he that encreaseth Knowledge encreaseth Sorrow.* But the Apostle goes farther, and tells us, *No Man knoweth the Things of God, but the Spirit of God; i. e.* the Gods Saints, Those who are taught *of him to cast down Imagination, and every high thing which exalteth it self against the Obedience of Christ:* So that in this Sense, the good Christian is the only knowing Man: *They alone who do his Will, can understand the Doctrine which is from him.* And what a Throng of Heady, High-minded, Proud Boasters will this cast down at once? *Where is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this World?* Our several Heads of Factious Contenders, the hair-brain'd Enthusiast, the confident Solifidian, and Pharisaical Zealot, will find themselves involv'd among that Catalogue, *which professe to know God, but in Works deny him; being abominable and disobedient, and to every good Work reprobate, or void of Judgment.* Let us not be deceiv'd; an inspir'd Christian at this time o'the Day, is a very Monster. Divine as well as Natural Knowledge, is acquir'd by Study, Meditation, and Prayer, a clear Head, and a devout Heart; that the one may rightly apprehend, and the other modestly

modeſtly revere thoſe Divine Myſteries which captivate the Underſtanding to the Obedience of Faith, make Reaſon ſtand amaz'd, and humbly confeſs its Inſufficiency, its Blindneſs and Folly. That there ſhould be three diſtinct Perſons in *One* Eſſence, and two diſtinct Natures in *one* Perſon: That Virginity ſhould Conceive, Immortality Die, and Mortality riſe from Death to Life: That there ſhould be a Finite and Mortal God, or an Infinite and Immortal Man, are μεγα, ομολογουμενως μεγα, are great, marvellouſly great and profound Myſteries. In the Search whereof, Reaſon finding it ſelf at a Loſs, is forc'd to reſolve all into the Omnipotency of that Divine Power and Goodneſs, *whoſe Ways are unſearcheable, and Paths paſt finding out.* But, nevertheleſs, we muſt not enthuſiaſtically deſert or contemn thoſe Auxiliary Arts and Sciences, without which, it is impoſſible we ſhould comprehend the Depths of divine Truth: Some Light is therefore neceſſary to be drawn at this Fountain. Yet, after all, the Sacred Oracles of God, I mean, the Holy Scripture, is the chief Source or Spring-head unto which the Diſpenſers of God's Word, are to reſort for thoſe enlight'ning Draughts of Spiritual Knowledge, which are to ſtream thro' them (as it were the Conduits) upon their reſpective Flocks, for ſcattering and diſperſing the groſs Miſts of Sin

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and Error, and illuminating the gloomy Regions of the Church Militant with the shining Irradiations of Truth and Vertue. This is that kind of Knowledge which *Timothy* is said to have had from a Child, and which he is so highly commended by St. *Paul* for so having: And it is such a Piece of Knowledge, as were unpardonable in the meanest Light of the Church, in the least of Christ's Ministers, to be defective in it. So much for Subjective Knowledge, being the first Ingredient in the Character of a Spiritual Luminary.

2dly, The second part of his Character consists in the Application of this Knowledge to its proper Object, namely, the Reason or Understanding of Men. And for discovering in what Manner and Proportion this Application is to be made, it may not be amiss to observe, *how* that the Great Creator of the *Universe maketh his Sun* (the greatest Celestial Luminary) *to rise on the Evil and on the Good: For he is gracious unto all; and his Mercy is over all his Works.* And this same merciful God (as St. *Paul* assures us) *will have all Men to be saved, and come unto the Knowledge of the Truth,* (1 Tim. 2. 4.) So that ye (my Reverend Brethren, who are the Spiritual Luminaries of the Church) will not need my Remembrance, That it is your Duty to go and do likewise; That 'tis your Part to diffuse and

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shed abroad the Light of the Gospel Truth upon the Heads and Hearts of all that hear you, not withholding the comfortable Refreshment thereof from any, even the worst of Sinners, that all Mankind may be warm'd and illuminated by its quickning Rays if they please; that is, unless they *shun* or *shut* their Eyes against it: For daily Experience too sadly assures us, that the *Shine* of the Truth, which is invigorating to the Eye of a *Sound* and *Steady* Conscience, proves too *bright* and *dazling* for the Eye of that Conscience which is *tender* and squeamish: For Men of *Tender* (i. e. of *Sick*) *Consciences*, can no more digest *sound Doctrine*, than Men of *sickly* Constitutions can digest *strong Meats*. What then? Shall the Light of the Gospel Truth forbear to shine, because of the Tenderness of some Consciences, who cry out that they're offended at it? Nay, but ask them, doth the *Sun* forbear to shine, because there are Whooting *Owles*, and other Tender-Sighted *Birds*, who cannot bear his dazling Appearance; but repair unto Barns and other Covert for avoiding it? Shall the Sound be robed to humour the Sick, or the Strong be stinted to pleasure the Weak, especially when the Infirmity or Distemper is rather *Affected* than *Natural*? Nay, but let the Saving Truth be liberally and impartially dispens'd unto All, and let it be

their Fault, and *not* Yours, if any ſhould periſh by reaſon of it, that is, by reaſon of chuſing Darkneſs rather than Light, and preferring a blind, perverſe, and ſelf-condemning Humour, to the plain, ſound, and Saving Truth. Yours it is to Combat Sin and Error, which is the Spiritual Darkneſs that reigns in high Places; and no where to give them *Quarter* wherever you find them, but if poſſible to Rout and Expel them from the Face of the whole Earth. You are to *ſpare* the Sinner indeed, if poſſible, whom Chriſt *Died* to *Save*; but to *Deſtroy* Sin without Mercy, which Chriſt alſo *Died* to *Vanquiſh*, and yet you will ſo remember to *Temper* your *Zeal* in this Spiritual Warfare, as to make it plain and manifeſt that they are not Men, but Errour and Wickedneſs, which you War againſt. For tho' you have St. *Paul*'s Authority *to be Inſtant in Seaſon, and out of Seaſon, and to Reprove, Rebuke, and Exhort*— Yet it is with this Abatement, that it be done *with all Long-ſuffering and Doctrine.* Which plainly implies, tho' you are to give no Quarter to Sin, but ſtab it to the Heart, yet that you are to treat the Perſons of Men with all becoming Mildneſs and Decorum. But yet you will beware, leaſt your good Manners ſhould ſtrain the Point too far, and prevail on you out of meer Complaiſance, to propheſie *ſmooth* Things to pleaſure the Ears of *Sinners*, where they

they rather have need of the Thunder of the Law to rouſe and awaken their Conſciences, out of the deadly Lethergy of Sin. And you will remember, that in order to exterminate Vice and Error, you muſt always propound the Truth Faithfully, adhere to it Inflexibly, and defend it Manfully: For renounce it you cannot, without the vileſt Apoſtacy; turn your Backs upon it you cannot, without the baſeſt Cowardice; betray it you cannot, without the higheſt Treaſon! And indeed *Silence* it ſelf is Criminal when the *Sacred Truth* is Aſſaulted; as Neutrality is little leſs than Treaſon when Majeſty is attack'd by the *Rebellious Subject*: For, as every *Subject* is obliged by Virtue of his Allegiance, to be Active in Defence of his Prince, when occaſion requires; ſo is every Miniſter of the Goſpel oblig'd by Virtue of his *Sacred Office* to be Active, in the Vindication of the Goſpel-Truth on the like Occaſion! And indeed not to Maintain the Truth when it is Oppugn'd, is implicitly to betray it. Betray it! What ſhould be able to tempt us to betray or ſell the Truth, which is ineſtimable? *Buy the Truth, and ſell it not*, (ſays *Solomon*). Let no Price be too dear, no Labour too great, to purchaſe and find it it out: But let not any Intereſt of this *Paultry* Life be thought big enough to Bribe it from you—Since the Merchandiſe of it is better than the Merchandiſe of

Silver, and the Gain thereof than fine Gold: It is more precious than Rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto it! — And, for God sake, what avails the utmost highs of Worldly Wealth or Grandeur, if they must be the Price of a prostituted Conscience? And how little is the utmost Severity of Persecution it self to be regarded, if it be undergone for *His* Truth's Sake, who hath told us (and we are sure he will not deceive us) *that theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven* who are so persecuted? How *contemptible* a Thing is *Fear*, and how *mean* a Thing is *Favour*, when the one must be avoided, or the other obtain'd, by an inglorious Apostacy from the *sound* Principles of our Holy Profession? What a despicable Coward is he, who will not manfully defend that Truth, which, if defended, will infallibly entitle him to the Kingdom of Heaven? And how abandon'd to Folly is he that will betray it, since the Reward of such Treason will unquestionably be, to have his Portion assign'd him with the Devil and his Angels? Let us cry aloud therefore, and spare not, but lift up our Voice like a Trumpet in the Truth's Defence, tho' we be compassed about with *its* Enemies and *ours*; leaving the Success of our Endeavours to the Almighty, who, if he thinks fit, can at any time render the weakest of his Ministers

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the Bleſſed Inſtruments of reſcuing Perſecuted Truth from Oppreſſion: And how glorious is the Triumph of him, who has the Honour to reſcue the Perſecuted Truth? Nay, or even to fall a Martyr in its Defence?

The Words of our truly great and worthy Dioceſian, is equal to all that *can* be ſaid on this Subject; which, to make amends for the Littleneſs of what hath been offer'd of my own, I beg leave to repeat. 'In other things 'indeed it becomes them (ſpeaking of the 'Clergy) and it is a part of that Prudence 'which it is their Duty to exerciſe in their 'Behaviour towards others, to be as compliant 'and complaiſant as they can; and according 'to St. *Paul*'s Example, to be made all things 'to all Men, that they may by all Means 'gain ſome, 1 *Cor.* 9. 22. But the Truth of 'the Goſpel is not to be parted with upon 'any Terms; neither may they, upon any 'Conſideration whatſoever, ſooth up their 'People in their Sins, and cry, *Peace, Peace,* 'when there is no Peace. Nay, if they only 'wink at their Faults, if they only forbear to 'reprove them of their Sins, and to acquaint 'them with the Danger, they are careleſs of 'their Charge, and unfaithful to their Truſt; 'and while they ſeem tender of giving Of-'fence, do indeed give the greateſt Offence, 'at once expoſing their Sacred Office to Con-'tempt,

'tempt, and hazarding the Salvation of their 'own Souls. For so we are plainly told, '*Ezek.* 33. 7. I have set thee a Watchman un-'to the House of *Israel*, therefore thou shalt 'hear the Word at my Mouth, and warn them 'from me: When I say unto the Wicked, 'O wicked Man, thou shalt surely die; if 'thou do'st not speak to warn the wicked 'Man from his Way, that wicked Man shall 'die in his Iniquity, but his Blood will I re-'quire at thine Hand.

These are the shining Words of the great Luminary which adorns th s our Hemisphere; and it would be unpardonable in me on this Occasion, to omit observing, that his Example in boldly asserting the Truth, and rebuking Vice, when perhaps it was not only least fashionable, but even most dangerous to do so, hath been as emphatical and shining as these his Words.

And this puts me in mind of the last thing considerable in a Clergy-man, under the Notion of his being a Luminary, that is, his manner of Appearance or Example, which I will but just touch upon.

And here it will not be improper to observe, that the Sun when 'tis eclips'd, is so far dark'ned (as to its Effect I mean dark'ned) as 'tis eclipsed; and tho' luminous, and full of subjective Light, yet, as for any Benefit the

World

World receives from it during its Eclipſe, differs nothing from an Opac or dark Planet. 'Tis nothing otherwiſe with a Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical Luminary: While a Clergy-man labours under the Eclipſe of any ſcandalous habitual Sin, the Effect of his Miniſtry is in danger of being interepted from the Church, in Proportion to the Meaſure and Continuance of the Scandal: For how natural, nay, how neceſſary, is the Appeal from a Man's Preaching to his Practice? And how difficult is it for another to believe that Perſon when he utters and holds forth the tremendous Treats of the Goſpel, who lives as tho' he did not believe them himſelf? 'Tis true indeed, that the Immorality of a Preacher of Righteouſneſs, is no juſt Argument againſt the Truth of Chriſtianity; however, it may be by ſome urged as ſuch: But nevertheleſs, it cannot be denied, but that it is a great, nay, and perhaps the greateſt Scandal to it! A Block of Offence to the Ignorant and Fooliſh, who cannot diſtinguiſh between the Faults of a Man's Perſon, and the Sacredneſs of his Function.

And therefore a Clergy-man, who is to ſupply the Office of a Luminary to the Church of Chriſt, ought not only to enlighten it by the Light of thoſe Sacred Truths which he is ſent to communicate, but alſo by the more influential Light of an examplary Behaviour; and to

let

ler the Light of his Works, as well as his Words, so shine before Men, that they may (both ways) be induced to glorify their Father which is in Heaven. And for this Cause, St. *Paul* cautions *Timothy*, To *take heed to himself, as well as to his Doctrine*; because he should be good, as well as make others so, having himself to save, as well as those that hear him. And again, the same St. *Paul* hath given in Charge to the same *Timothy*, and in him to all the Sacred Order, to be an Example to Believers, as well in the Purity of Conversation, as in the Word of Instruction (1 *Tim.* 4. 12.) which St. *Paul* himself (as he assures us) *Took care to give no Offence to Jew or Gentile, or to the Church of God, that the Ministry should not be blamed*, 1 Cor. 10. 32.

And now I come to apply the whole briefly. And,

1*st*. As in the first place I have argued the Catholick or Universal Church to be one Society, under the Hierarchy of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, being so constituted by the Apostles. The Dissenters of every Kind must therefore pardon me, if I pronounce them all to be Schismaticks, in refusing to comply with this Form of Church Government: Neither will it be enough to excuse them, if they should urge, That they can answer all those Texts which are generally alledged to prove the

the Apoſtolical Inſtitution of Biſhops (which yet they are far from being able to do); unleſs, beſides anſwering thoſe Scriptures, they can alſo harden themſelves againſt the Belief of *One Catholick Church*; the *Unity* whereof in the Beginning, was evidently *maintain'd* by the Means of *this* Hierarchy: For if they believe one Catholick Church, they ſtand further accountable for departing from Epiſcopal Government (ſuppoſing, with them, that Biſhops are not of Divine Right, but Human Inſtitution); this Government being not prohibited by the Law of God, to introduce their own Models, which the Word of God hath no where enjoyn'd: (For where the Word of God hath left Matters indifferent, ſo as neither to prohibit or enjoyn them, the Authority of the Catholick Church, without Queſtion, is binding): So that by departing from it, they do in plain Terms proclaim to the Church, that they will not be of it, unleſs they may be govern'd as they liſt themſelves; whereas, in Truth, they cannot be of it, by refuſing to be ſo govern'd, as the whole Church from the Beginning hath been govern'd. But indeed, we may ſafely challenge them to give us any reaſonable Account how the whole Chriſtian World ſhould agree to exalt the Biſhops into a Rank above the Clergy and People both, if this Order had

been forbidden, nay, rather if it had not been inſtituted by the Apoſtles. And then, if the Diſſenters are all Schiſmaticks, as from the Premiſes they evidently appear all to be, for deſtroying the Unity of the Catholick Church, and refuſing Obedience and Conformity to her juſt Laws; then, let them be aſſured, that no Toleration or Indulgence from the State, will exempt them from the *Spiritual* Guilt of Schiſm, however it may exempt them from the *Civil* Penalty thereof: For, altho' the Civil Magiſtrate hath the Power to take off what he hath the Power to lay on, that is Civil Puniſhment: Yet he hath neither Power nor Authority to alter the *Immutable Nature* of Things; nor to make that to become *Innocent* and *Blameleſs*, which God by his Holy Spirit, ſpeaking in the Scriptures, hath *declared* to be *Criminal* and *Sinful*, as 'tis manifeſt he hath declared Schiſm to be. And truly, it is hard to gueſs by what Spirit the Modern Presbyterians ſhould be ſo irreconcileably animated againſt the Prelacy, as rather to ſmite the Church in ſunder, than to comply with it. This is ſuch a Spirit of Obſtinacy, as I am ſure they deriv'd from none of their pretended Founders: For *Luther* himſelf profeſſes to quarrel, not againſt true Biſhops, but againſt Popiſh Tyrants.

Bucer

Bucer adviſes, by all means, the reſtoring ſuch Eccleſiaſtical Governments, as the Canons preſcribe to Biſhops and Metropolitans.

Calvin recommends the Hierarchy to the King of *Poland*; and treating concerning the Primitive Church, ſays, That the Ancient Government by Arch-Biſhops and Biſhops, and the Nicene Conſtitution of Patriarchs, was for good Government, and Order ſake.

Beſa, (the rigid Succeſſor of *Calvin*) being check'd by the Arch-Biſhop of *Canterbury*, for intermedling beyond his Sphere; — *We do not charge* (ſays he) *all Arch-Biſhops and Biſhops with Tyranny.*——*The Church of* England *hath afforded many Learned Men, many glorious Martyrs of that Function. If that Authority be there ſtill in Being, may a perpetual Bleſſing go along with it:* [Fruatur ſane iſta ſingulari Dei beneficentia, quæ utinam illi ſit perpetua!] This being with all Ceremony addreſſed, — *Totius Angliæ Primati*; —To the Primate of all *England*. And,

Laſtly, *Zanchi* not only affirms *Epiſcopacy to be agreeable to the Word of God*; but that alſo, where it has obtain'd, it ought to continue; and where by Violence it hath been aboliſhed, that it ought to be reſtored. — *Ubi vigent non eſſe abolendos, & ubicunque Iniquitas temporum eos abolevit reſtituendos.*

I will conclude this, in the Words of *Dionysius* of *Alexandria* to *Novatian* the Schismatick, which, with a small Variation, may serve as an expostulatory Exhortation to all the Heads of separate Congregations: Εἰδέναι σε χρὴ ταῦτα, εἰ βίᾳ ἀπῆχθης, εἰ ἀκούσιος ἐξεστράφης ἐκεῖθεν. Ἔδει μὲν γὰρ καὶ πάντα ὑπομεῖναι πρὸ τοῦ μὴ διασχίσαι τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ. &c. That is, "If you were forc'd "away from the Communion of the Church "against your Will, as you pretend, you "may easily evince the Truth of that, by "your voluntary Return. But, indeed, you "should have indur'd any thing, rather than "smite in sunder the Church of God: For "to suffer even Martyrdom rather than di-"vide the Church, had been no less glorious, "than to have suffer'd it, rather than com-"mit Idolatry; but rather the more glorious "of the two in my Judgment: Because, in "the former Case, a Man suffers it for his "own *Soul* alone; but in the latter, for the "*whole* Church. And if, even *now*, you can "*perswade* or *constrain* the Brethren to re-"turn to *Catholick Communion*, your very Fall "will not be so great as this Exploit: But if "they will not be ruled, and you cannot pre-"vail, yet by all Means save your own "Soul. But,

2*dly*,

2dly, If the Sacred Order in general are the Miniſters and Ambaſſadors of Chriſt; and if they have in all Ages and Countries, been reverenced and reſpected, as well for their Maſter's, as for their Work's Sake: Why then, for the People to go about villifying or undervaluing the Order at this time o'the Day? What leſs is it than to break in upon the moſt ancient and venerable Preſcription? And, what is yet worſe, to inſult the Great and the Holy One, who inhabits Eternity, even God Almighty, in the Perſons of theſe his Ambaſſadors? — *He that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me* (ſaith the Son of God concerning the Clergy); *and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me.* And, on the other Hand, — *He that receiveth a Prophet in the Name of a Prophet, ſhall receive a Prophet's Reward.* And again, — *He that giveth even a Cup of cold Water to one of theſe little Ones; verily, I ſay unto you, he ſhall in no wiſe looſe his Reward.* Indeed, it is no great Wonder, if the proud Boaſters and Scorners, if the Atheiſts, and Deiſts, and Libertines of the Age, ſhould (notwithſtanding all that hath been ſaid to their Honour) uſe them contumelioufly, making them the *Buts* or Marks whereat to ſhoot their keeneſt Arrows, even bitter Words: For ſince theſe Men uſe God

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and Religion themselves with Scorn and Outrage; since they will *curse the one, and look upwards; and shoot out the Lip, and shake the Head at the other, saying, A-ha! so would we have it; down with it, down with it, even to the Ground:* No wonder, I say, if they serve all such as retain to God and Religion in the same Sawce. But for those who expect to be saved (under Christ) through our Ministry (and all those who are committed to our Care, must be so saved, or not at all); For those, I say, to treat us irreverently or contumeliously, is, I confess, not a little wonderful and strange: For what can be more unaccountable, or even inhuman, than for the Laity to watch over the Clergy, for *Evil*, (as their Custom too often is) whose whole Business and Endeavour it is to watch over them for *Good?* Is it a generous Return in them to revile and worry our Persons, whose main Study and Contrivance it is how to save their Souls from final Perdition! God forgive those who treat their Spiritual Guides in this manmanner: But may God also turn their Hearts; for so long as they remain in their present Plit, God will not easily forgive them.

3*dly*, And lastly, As I have shewn how absolutely necessary in the Composition of a Clergyman, are the Ingredients of Learning, but

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Knowledge, Sincerity, Courage, and Exemplary Morals: So the Application will be short and easy; that is, to shun their Contraries, as the great *Blemishes* of the Sacred *Function*, and the great *Scandals* of *Christianity*: For how vile a Blot would *Ignorance* reflect upon the Face of that Person, whose Lips should keep Knowledge, and at whose Mouth the People are to seek the [illegible] Messenger of the Lo[illegible]; Stain would [illegible] requir'd to d[illegible] fully, and n[illegible] base a Slur would [illegible] of *one*, who is t[illegible] to keep others fa[illegible] like a Man, and h[illegible] Perseverance? B[illegible] presibly odious and [illegible] Person (who is [illegible] Holy Things, un[illegible] render'd by Vice an[illegible] get my self; not consider[illegible] ing these Things before Men, whose Wisdom, whose Integrity, whose religious Zeal, and, finally, whose exemplary Behaviour, prevent all that can be urged to recommend these shining Graces unto them. Go on, my Reverend Brethren, to adorn your Profession as

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ye are your to do; Let your Wisdom and Sincerity convince, or, at least, shame all Gain-sayers! Let your Holy Zeal continue to adorn and defend the Faith! In one Word, —*Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven*: And then, depend upon it, your Heavenly Father will mutually [illegible] your Glory to shine as [illegible] Wheels, in [illegible] and the [illegible] Glory, for

FINIS.